

IN THE CLAIMS

AI 1. (Currently Amended) A method of sharing queries in a hub processing unit coupled to a plurality of information processing units over a network, the method on the information processing unit comprising the steps of:

receiving a string from a first user;

determining if the string is a query, if the string is a query performing the sub-steps of:

storing the query in an information processing unit; and

forwarding the query to a hub processing unit in the event that the first user selects a query for sharing with a second user connected to the hub processing unit.

2. (Currently Amended) The method as defined in claim 1, wherein the sub-step of forwarding further includes the sub-step of receiving from the second user, a selection of a query from a query history list.

3. (Currently Amended) The method as defined in claim 1, wherein the sub-step of forwarding further includes the sub-step of receiving from the second user, a selection of a query from the received string that has been shown to be a query.

4. (Original) The method as defined in claim 1, wherein the determining step further includes the sub-step of analyzing the string for a particular character or characters to determine if the string is a query.

5. (Currently Amended) The method as defined in claim 1, wherein the sub-step of forwarding further comprises the sub-step of appending additional information from the first user to the shared query.

6. (Original) The method as defined in claim 5, wherein the appending step further includes appending additional information comprising category, title or descriptive information.

7. (Original) The method as defined in claim 1, wherein the storing sub-step further includes storing the query in an information processing unit wherein the storing is temporary or permanent storage.

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8. (Currently Amended) The method as defined in claim 1, further comprising a step of repetitively processing incoming strings as long as strings are received from the first user.

9. (Currently Amended) A method of sharing queries in a hub processing unit coupled to a plurality of client information processing units over a network, the method on the hub processing unit comprising the steps of:

receiving a query selected for sharing by a first user of a client information processing system;

storing the query;

~~eatching~~capturing search requests for shared queries entered by a second user;

processing the search requests;

upon finding an interesting shared query by the second user, performing the further sub-steps of:

activating a hyperlink to request a search result set upon user selection of the hyperlink; and

displaying the search result set for a user's review.

10. (Currently Amended) The method as defined in claim 9, wherein the ~~eatching~~capturing step further comprises ~~eatching~~capturing searches made through headlines for documents.

11. (Original) The method as defined in claim 9, wherein the receiving step further includes a sub-step of validating a received query string.

12. (Currently Amended) The method as defined in claim 9, further comprising a step of awarding at least one of a reward ~~or~~ and points for at least one query submission by a user.

13. (Original) The method as defined in claim 12, wherein the awarding step further comprises notifying an accounting manager of the query submission.

14. (Currently Amended) A client information processing unit coupled via a network with a hub processing unit apparatus for sharing queries comprising:

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an input for receiving a string from a first user;
a comparator for determining if the string is a query;
an interface for storing the query in an information processing unit memory; and
an output for forwarding the query to a hub processing unit in the event that ~~an information processing unit~~ the first user selects a query for sharing with a second user connected to the hub processing unit.

15. (Currently Amended) The client information processing unit as defined in claim 14, wherein the input further includes a selection device so that ~~a~~ the first user selects a query from a query history list.

16. (Currently Amended) The client information processing unit as defined in claim 14, wherein the input further includes a selection device so that ~~a~~ the first user selects a query from the received string that has been shown to be a query.

17. (Currently Amended) The client information processing unit as defined in claim 14, wherein the comparator includes an analyzer which analyzes the string for a particular character or characters to determine if the string is a query.

18. (Currently Amended) The client information processing unit as defined in claim 14, wherein the input further includes a graphical user interface that allows the first user to append additional information to the shared query.

19. (Original) The client information processing unit as defined in claim 18, wherein the graphical user interface further includes a pop-up dialog box that requests additional information comprising category, title or descriptive information.

20. (Original) The client information processing unit as defined in claim 14, wherein the information processing unit memory further includes permanent or temporary memory.

21. (Currently Amended) A server for sharing queries in a client-server network comprising:

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an input means for receiving from a client over a network, a query selected by a first user for sharing;

interface means for storing the query received;

means for searching through queries by a second user;

means for finding an interesting shared query by the second user;

means for activating a hyperlink to request a result set if the shared query is of value to the second user; and

means for perusing the search result set if the shared query is of value to the second user.

22. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium including programming instructions, the programming instructions including instructions for query sharing in a client server network comprising:

reception instructions for receiving a string from a client-first user;

determination instructions for determining if the string is a query;

storing instructions for storing the query in a client computer if the string is a query; and

forwarding instructions for forwarding the query to a server in the event that the string is a query and the client-first user selects a query for sharing with a second user connected to the hub processing unit.

23. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 22, further comprising instructions for selective sharing of URLs.